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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5137
INFO RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY 4804
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 8614

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 001004

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

NEA FOR NEA/IPA; OES/IB FOR WINN; DEPT PASS TO USAID FOR
ANE/MEA:MCLOUD/BORODIN; DEPT PASS TO USDA; HHS FOR CDC AND
OGHA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: TBIO KFLU SENV ECON EAGR EAID KWBG IS

SUBJECT: TWO H1N1 CASES CONFIRMED IN THE WEST BANK

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Palestinian Authority (PA) Ministry of Health officials have confirmed two cases of H1N1 in the West Bank (Bethlehem). A four-year-old girl was diagnosed on June 10, and her mother on June 13. Both cases were characterized as "mild," and the patients are expected to recover fully, according to WHO contacts. The Ministry of Health expects an increase in the number of cases as summer travel picks up.
End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Dr. Assad Ramlavi, General Director of Primary Health Care and Public Health in the PA Ministry of Health, confirmed to Econoff on June 15 that a four-year-old girl and her mother in Bethlehem have been diagnosed with H1N1. The child reportedly developed a fever after returning from Texas, and was diagnosed on June 10.

¶3. (SBU) The confirmation was made as part of a coordinated process with the GOI, according to WHO Public Health Officer Katija Schemionek. First, the girl was admitted into Caritas hospital in Bethlehem, and a "nasal-pharynx" swab was taken and sent to a hospital in Ramallah. The Ramallah hospital confirmed the "H1" portion of the diagnosis, and then in coordination with the GOI MoH, the sample was sent to a lab in Tel Aviv, where the final confirmation was made. The mother's case was confirmed in the hospital lab in Ramallah on June 13. WHO contacts characterized the coordination between the PA and GOI Health Ministries as "excellent" on epidemics and related technical issues.

¶4. (SBU) Both the child and her mother are being treated with Tamiflu, according to Dr. Ramlavi. He said that although they are not officially "quarantined," they are not leaving the home in Bethlehem, are wearing masks, and health workers in Bethlehem monitor their situation daily. Another relative who lives in the house displayed flu-like symptoms, but tested negative for H1N1 on June 14. Dr. Ramlavi noted that hospitals in the West Bank are seeing an increasing number of suspected cases, and he expects the number of real cases to rise as the summer travel season continues.

WALLES